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TAGS: OREP (SOLARZ, STEPHEN)

SUBJECT: CODEL SOLARZ VISIT TO EGYPT

REF: STATE 7327

SUMMARY: CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN SOLARZ, D-NY, PAID VISIT TO EGYPT FEBRUARY 7-11, 1975 ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS FOR HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. DURING VISIT SOLARZ MET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT, PRIME MINISTER HEGAZI, FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY, PRESIDENTIAL PRESS ADVISOR BESHIR AND MANAGING EDITOR GAMAL OF AL-AHRAM. SOLARZ ALSO VISITED SUEZ CANAL AND TOURED BAR LEV LINE WITH CODEL IPU. SOLARZ PERSISTENTLY QUESTIONED EVERYONE REGARDING EGYPTIAN POSITION ON FURTHER DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IN SINAI AND ON MOVEMENT ON OTHER FRONTS. SOLARZ IMPRESSED ALL WHOM HE MET WITH FRANK AND OPEN ATTITUDE AND IN TURN SAID HE IMPRESSED WITH FRANKNESS OF ANSWERS FROM EGYPTIAN INTERLOCUTORS. END SUMMARY

1. REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN SOLARZ PAID VISIT TO EGYPT FEB 7-11, ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS FOR HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, A DAY LONGER THAN EXPECTED BECAUSE OF CHANGE IN HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND ONWARD TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY BAD WEATHER IN LEBANON AND SYRIA. IN TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS AND OTHERS SOLARZ DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS REPRESENTATIVE OF LARGEST JEWISH CONSTITUENCY IN THE NATION IN SEARCH OF

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INFORMATION ABOUT ARAB POSITION AND GENERAL BACKGROUND ON

ARAB ECONOMICS AND VIEWPOINTS. NOTING HE HAD BEEN EXPOSED ONLY TO PRO-ISRAELI VIEWS, HE INDICATED DESIRE ALSO LEARN ARAB POSITION IN INTERESTS OF ACHIEVING BALANCE. HE ASKED SAME SERIES OF QUESTIONS OF ALL PERSONS WHOM HE MET AND TOOK COPIOUS SHORTHAND NOTES. HE MET AMONG OTHERS WITH PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER, AL-AHRAM MANAGING EDITOR, PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND PRESIDENT'S PRESS ADVISOR.

2. ON ARRIVAL FEB 7 SOLARZ WAS BRIEFED BY EMBASSY STAFF AND HAD TWO AND ONE HALF HOUR SESSION WITH AMBASSADOR. THURST OF HIS QUESTIONING, WHICH PERSISTED THROUGHOUT VISIT, WAS EXTENT TO WHICH SADAT READY TO ENTER INTO ANOTHER DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, WHAT SADAT EXPECTS TO GET FROM ISRAELIS, WHAT HE IS WILLING TO GIVE ISRAELIS IN EXCHANGE, AND POSSIBILITY HE WOULD AND COULD MOVE INDEPENDENTLY OF SYRIA AND JORDAN/PLO. HE PROBED ONE AND ALL CLOSELY ON TERMS WHICH SADAT COULD ACCEPT IN FURTHER DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, MENTIONING A TRUCE FOR A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME, E.G. THREE YEARS. HE ALSO ASKED WHAT SCENARIO WOULD BE IF SECRETARY'S STEP-BY-STEP EFFORTS COLLAPSE AND GENEVA CONFERENCE RESUMES.

3. IN FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH YOUNG MEMBERS OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AT DINNER GIVEN BY CONTROL OFFICER FEB 7, SOLARZ WAS TOLD THAT EGYPT IS BEHIND SADAT, THAT SADAT COULD NOT MOVE ALONE, AND THAT HE HAD TO GET BACK OIL FIELDS AND PASSES IN THIS MOVE. IN SATURDAY MORNING MEETING WITH AL-AHRAM EDITOR ALI HAMDI AL GAMAL, GAMAL STRESSED EGYPTIAN AND OTHER ARAB FEELING THAT WOULD, IN HIS OPINION, PREVENT ANY SEPARATE MOVE BY EGYPT IN ANOTHER ROUND OF DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS. IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH PA FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, SOLARZ RESPONDED TO QUESTION RE CONTINUED AMERICAN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL BY SAYING THAT ISRAEL COULD NOT EXPECT SUPPORT FOR QUOTE ADVENTURES UNQUOTE, BUT THAT LARGE SCALE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL AS LONG AS THERE NO MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE. LATER AT LUNCHEON CHAIRMAN GOMAA STRESSED TO SOLARZ COMPLETE CONFIDENCE WHICH PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY HAS IN PRESIDENT SADAT AND HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEACEFUL APPROACH TO SOLUTION. GOMAA EMPHASIZED EGYPT'S DESIRE FOR PEACE AND ITS DETERMINATION TO PURSUE IT TO THE END. IN RESPONSE TO SOLARZ QUESTION ABOUT POSITION OF JORDAN IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, GOMAA SAID THAT, IF EGYPT AND SYRIA REACH ACCOMODATION AND IF ISRAEL REFUSES TO DEAL WITH PLO AS CODEL HYPOTHEZIZED, SITUATION COULD CHANGE. ARABS MIGHT BE WILLING LET HUSSEIN MAKE A DEAL FOR THE WEST BANK. ASKED REMINIMUM THAT PA WOULD APPROVE FOR NEXT

DISENGAGEMENT STEP, GOMAA TOLD CODEL THAT ANYTHING SADAT BROUGHT BACK WOULD BE APPROVED. THIS PROMPTED CODEL COMMENT THAT SADAT APPARENTLY HAD MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION THAN PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED TO HIM IN TERMS OF ABU RUDAYS AND THE PASSES.

4. IN EVENING MEETING (FEB 8) WITH TAHSEEN BESHIR, SOLARZ PURSUED SAME LINE OF QUESTIONING. BESHIR SAID THAT EGYPT WOULD INCLUDE SUEZ RECONSTRUCTION AND REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL FOR ISRAELI CARGOES AS CONCESSIONS FOR NEXT STEP DISENGAGEMENT. BESHIR SAID THAT SADAT MEANS IT WHEN HE SAYS EGYPT AND SYRIA WILL NOT ATTACK ISRAEL. BESHIR ALSO MADE POINT THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT GO TO WAR IN SUPPORT OF SYRIAN ATTACK, BUT EGYPT WOULD COME TO SYRIAN DEFENSE IF SHE WERE ATTACKED BY ISRAEL.

5. MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT COVERED SEPTTEL (CAIRO 1527).

6. IN MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER HEGAZI AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FAHMY, SOLARZ PURSUED HIS LINE OF QUESTIONING, BUT RECEIVED LESS SPECIFIC AND CANDID COMMENTS THAN HE HAD GOTTEN FROM GAMAL AND GOMAA.

7. DURING DAY LONG TRIP TO SUEZ, CODEL VISIBLY IRRITATED EGYPTIAN MILITARY BY DENIGRATING EGYPTIAN CROSSING EFFORT AND STATISTICS QUOTED AND POINTED OUT SIGNIFICANCE OF ISRAELI BULGE AND ITS ALMOST FATAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE THIRD ARMY. SOLE RESPONSE FROM EGYPTIAN MILITARY BRIEFER WAS TO POINT OUT THAT QUESTION WAS BEING ASKED ON EAST SIDE OF SUEZ CANAL OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL PRIOR TO OCTOBER WAR.

COMMENT : CODEL SOLARZ IMPRESSED ALL WHOM HE MET WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIS FRANK AND OPEN ATTITUDE AND HIS APPARENTLY SERIOUS AND DETERMINED INTEREST IN LEARNING EGYPTIAN VIEWS AND FEELINGS ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM HE PROFESSED TO BE IMPRESSED IN TURN WITH CORDIAL MANNER IN WHICH HE WAS RECEIVED AND FRANKNESS OF ANSWERS GIVEN HIM BY HIS EGYPTIAN INTERLOCUTORS. EILTS

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